

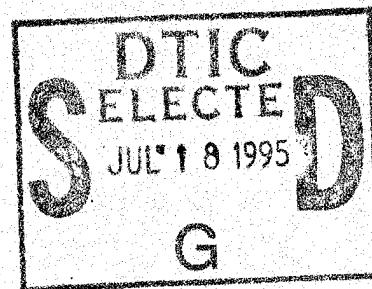
GAO

United States General Accounting Office
Report to Congressional Requesters

June 1994

PEACE OPERATIONS

Withdrawal of U.S. Troops From Somalia



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National Security and
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June 9, 1994

The Honorable Norman Sisisky
Chairman, Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

The Honorable James V. Hansen
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Oversight and
Investigations
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

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In response to your request, we have reviewed issues associated with the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia. This report provides information on (1) the remaining U.S. forces and their mission in Somalia, (2) the equipment left in Somalia by U.S. forces, and (3) the ongoing United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II). Appendix I provides responses to specific questions asked by your office.

Background

In April 1992, the United Nations established the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) to provide security for humanitarian relief efforts. The conditions in Somalia deteriorated, and in December 1992, the Security Council approved a U.S.-led multinational Unified Task Force (UNITAF) to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations and prepare for the subsequent transition to U.N. forces (UNOSOM II).

The transition to UNOSOM II occurred on May 4, 1993, and the majority of U.S. forces were withdrawn by that date. At that time there were about 2,900 U.S. logistics troops assigned to the UNOSOM II force and 1,100 troops deployed as a quick reaction force under U.S. command and not under the UNOSOM II command structure. U.S. combat forces ashore and afloat grew to about 14,000 personnel in October of 1993.

On October 7, 1993, the President announced the decision to withdraw almost all the U.S. troops from Somalia by March 31, 1994. This included logistics troops assigned to the U.N. force. Department of Defense (DOD) officials reported that the withdrawal was completed by March 25, 1994.

Troops were moved by ship from Mogadishu, Somalia, to Mombasa, Kenya, and airlifted to the United States. According to a DOD logistics official, returning equipment was cleaned, packed, and on board ship by that date.

Results in Brief

As of April 1994, about 90 U.S. government personnel remained in Somalia, including about 70 military personnel. The military mission is limited to providing security and assistance to the U.S. Liaison Office (USLO) and contract administration assistance to UNOSOM II. The United States plans to withdraw almost all military personnel, but a date for that withdrawal has not yet been set.

The United States sold over \$44 million worth of equipment to the United Nations and leased other items for almost \$4 million for use by military contingents attached to the U.N. force. Prior to the sale and lease of these items, the Army, which owned most of the items, studied the impact of these transactions on unit readiness and concluded that they would not lessen unit readiness.

UNOSOM II has replaced the logistics capability lost when the United States withdrew. Officials from the United Nations, the Department of State, and DOD told us they were confident that UNOSOM II is able to carry out its mandate at current troop levels, although DOD officials stated that a rapidly deteriorating security condition caused by inter-clan fighting could put successful execution of the mandate beyond the reach of UNOSOM II.

Scope and Methodology

We interviewed officials from the Departments of State, Defense, and Justice; the U.S. Mission to the United Nations; and the United Nations. We analyzed documents pertaining to the sale and lease of equipment, including documents discussing the loss of this equipment by the units and its impact on readiness.

We conducted our review from February to April 1994 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. We did not obtain agency comments on this report. However, we reviewed the results of our work with Defense, Justice, and State officials and incorporated their comments where appropriate.

As arranged with your office, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from its issue date. At that time, we will send copies of this report to the Chairmen, House and Senate Committees on Armed Services, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. We will also send copies to the Secretaries of Defense and State. Copies will be made available to others upon request.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please call me on (202) 512-3504. The major contributors to this report were Steven Sternlieb, Ann Borseth, and Joseph Kirschbaum.



Richard Davis
Director, National Security
Analysis

Questions and Answers About the Withdrawal of United States Troops From Somalia

Question 1

To what extent will U.S. forces remain in Somalia after March 31, 1994? What is the mission of the remaining U.S. forces? What is the rationale for U.S. forces to remain in Somalia?

Response

In November 1993, the Congress passed the fiscal year 1994 Defense Appropriations Act (P.L. 103-139). Included in this act is the so-called "Byrd Amendment" (section 8151), which restricts the obligation of funds for operations in Somalia. The amendment allowed the Department of Defense (DOD) to obligate funds for operations in Somalia only through March 31, 1994, unless the President requested and the Congress authorized an extension of the date. However, it allowed DOD to obligate funds after March 31, 1994, to support a limited number of troops to protect U.S. diplomatic facilities and citizens and a limited number of noncombat personnel to advise the U.N. commander.

As of April 1994, approximately 90 U.S. government personnel remained in Somalia. Fifty four were members of a Marine Fleet Antiterrorism Support Team Platoon in Somalia, including intelligence support, assigned to provide security to the U.S. Liaison Office (USLO) in Mogadishu at least through June 30, 1994. The State Department may replace these Marines with civilian security guards, but has not yet set a date for the replacement. Another 27 personnel were assigned to USLO, including 3 military personnel as part of the military liaison office. At the request of the United Nations, 12 contract specialists, both military and civilian, were seconded to the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) to assist in the administration of the logistics contract the United Nations has with Brown & Root, a U.S. engineering firm, and with other U.N. support contracts.

Also, an Amphibious Ready Group of about 4,000 personnel, including about 2,000 Marines, was stationed off the coast. This group's mission is to protect U.S. citizens and assist in their evacuation from Somalia if that becomes necessary. DOD officials expect to move the group to another location in the near future, but will continue to monitor events and develop contingency plans.

Question 2

To what extent does DOD plan to leave equipment in Somalia? What impact does this have on the readiness of the units that redeploy without their equipment? What financial arrangements does the United States have with

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the United Nations for reimbursing DOD for U.S. troops and equipment left in Somalia?

Response

The United States has sold the United Nations over \$44 million in equipment; lent it some equipment; and leased it other equipment for almost \$4 million for use by forces participating in UNOSOM II. This equipment was provided in an effort to help the operation maintain logistics and military support after U.S. forces withdrew.

Table I.1 summarizes the items sold by the United States to the United Nations.

Table I.1: Items Sold to the United Nations

Dollars in millions	
Description	Amount of sale
Items sold for use by Brown & Root	\$ 4.7
Items sold for use by the United Nations	6.6
Items sold in support of leased equipment	32.9
Total	\$44.2

When it became apparent that the United States was withdrawing from UNOSOM II, the United Nations requested that the United States sell equipment to it so that Brown & Root could continue to support the operation at a level similar to that available when U.S. forces were in Somalia. After receiving information on readiness needs from units losing equipment, Third Army, and Forces Command, a determination was made by the Army and the Joint Staff that two-thirds of the equipment requested by the United Nations for use by Brown & Root could be sold with no adverse impact on the readiness of the units from which it was drawn. The United Nations was allowed to purchase this equipment, which included forklifts, fuel/water tanks, tow bars, pumps, and firefighting equipment, for about \$4.7 million.

Though the items were not officially declared excess, the Army does not plan to replace most of them. To pay for the few items that may be replaced in the future, the Army Comptroller plans to use payments received from the sales to the United Nations. All of the equipment sold for use by Brown & Root was already in Somalia.

The United Nations also purchased other items that have been used by U.S. forces in Somalia. Many of these items would not have been shipped

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back with the departing units because it would have been impractical to clean and ship the items. Thus, the United States agreed to sell the United Nations about \$6.6 million in items such as runway matting, tents, building fixtures, air conditioners, various tools, and generators.

To support leased equipment, DOD sold the United Nations \$32.9 million in items such as spares packages, ammunition, communications gear, training, and transportation. According to DOD officials, the United Nations did not want to purchase a spare parts package to cover the entire lease period, but instead purchased a package to cover a three-month period for some equipment.

The United States is willing to sell the United Nations additional spare parts identified after March 31 to maintain both the equipment purchased and leased. However, DOD has agreed to fill such additional requisitions only if the United Nations establishes a cash account with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service from which payment for items could be drawn, because of the legislative restrictions placed on DOD's ability to obligate funds for anything but limited troop support in Somalia. DOD is working with the United Nations to determine if such an account can be established.

All sales to the United Nations were made under Letters of Assist, specific agreements under which the United States is paid to provide needed goods and services to the United Nations. These sales are handled under provisions in section 607 of the Foreign Assistance Act. DOD will receive payment directly from the United Nations for these sales; however, this law also allows DOD to receive payment within 180 days of the end of the fiscal year in which the commodities/services were provided. As we reported in March 1994, if the payment is received within this 180-day time frame, DOD has access to these funds.¹ If payment is not received within that time frame, the money must be deposited in the U.S. Treasury as miscellaneous receipts. DOD is in the process of preparing bills for the items sold and will submit these bills to the United Nations when they are complete.

The remaining one-third of the equipment requested by the United Nations, for use by Brown & Root, including items such as water pumps and purification units, shop equipment, and large trucks, was determined to be critical to the readiness of U.S. military units and not available for sale. However, DOD left behind some port handling equipment "on loan" to

¹Peace Operations: Cost of DOD Operations in Somalia (GAO/NSIAD-94-88, Mar. 4, 1994).

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UNOSOM II until the United Nations can duplicate the capability. This equipment is to remain in Somalia until May 31, 1994. However, DOD officials advised us that the United Nations has requested an extension for this equipment to remain in Somalia and that DOD is now considering this request. The United Nations is responsible for funding transportation for this equipment back to the United States.

To maintain operation of the airport in Mogadishu, the United Nations also requested that the United States leave some airfield support equipment in Somalia. A lease was arranged through the Air Force for items such as maintenance stands, staircase trucks, and an air cart. This lease will run through June 30, 1994, for a total of \$1,811.00. A second lease for airfield lighting and associated generator sets will run through September 30, 1994, for a total of \$15,886.00. The United Nations is responsible for funding return of these items to the United States.

To maintain some of the military capability previously available from U.S. forces in Somalia, the United States leased combat equipment to the United Nations for use by the Pakistani contingent in UNOSOM II. Items leased include 80 M-113A2 armored personnel carriers from stock in Europe, 30 M-60A3 tanks from stock in the United States, 8 AH-1S Cobra attack helicopters from the Hawaii National Guard, and 5 OH-58C Scout helicopters from stock in Europe. Also included are associated guns, grenade launchers, radios, radar sets, and test equipment. The leases run through December 1994 and require that the items be returned to the United States in the same condition in which they were received by the United Nations and that the items are to be paid for if destroyed. The total lease costs are \$3.9 million, to be paid by the end of the lease, and include a charge for depreciation. According to DOD officials, all leases were drawn up under section 61 of the Arms Export Control Act.

According to DOD officials, no units from which equipment was drawn for lease to the United Nations were forced to stand down due to the loss of such equipment. In each case, as required by the Arms Export Control Act, a determination was made that the items in question were not needed for public use. According to the terms of the leases, all items leased to the United Nations will remain the property of the U.S. military.

Some items belonging to U.S. forces in Somalia that were considered time-dated, such as bread rations and medicine, were transferred to the U.S. Agency for International Development in Somalia at no cost.

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The United States will not receive any reimbursement from the United Nations for the troops remaining in Somalia, except for the contract specialists seconded to UNOSOM II headquarters staff. These specialists are subject to the regular U.N. troop reimbursement paid to countries that contribute troops for the peacekeeping force.

Question 3

What is the status of U.N. efforts to replace the capabilities provided by the United States and other contingents that are withdrawing from Somalia? What are the types and estimated cost of any contractual relationships being negotiated with private parties?

Response

According to U.N. officials, the United Nations has signed a contract with the engineering firm of Brown & Root, from Houston, Texas, to continue to provide logistics services to UNOSOM II forces. This firm provided logistics services to the United States during Unified Task Force (UNITAF) and then to the United Nations since May 1993. The new contract is directly between the United Nations and Brown & Root and expands the level of service provided prior to the withdrawal of U.S. logistics troops. The contract is valued at \$30 million for 6 months beginning March 31, 1994, with an option to renew for another 6 months after that period. It covers such services as construction, water purification, trash removal, sanitation services, and power supply. The United States, which helped the United Nations work out the terms of the contract, is not a party to the contract and has no financial stake in it.

According to a U.N. official, the Brown & Root contract is a departure from U.N. contracting policies. The United Nations usually enters into a lengthy, competitive process before signing a contract with a private concern. However, the official stated that, given the short time frame in which the United Nations had to obtain the logistics services previously provided by U.S. troops, the contract had to be sole source. According to both DOD and State Department officials, it was important to the U.S. withdrawal to have negotiations well underway on this contract, since the United States did not want to leave UNOSOM II without logistics capabilities. The 12 U.S. contract specialists seconded to UNOSOM II are assisting in the administration of this contract.

The United Nations often enters into contracts with private companies for other goods and services. While Brown & Root is the largest contractor the

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United Nations has for UNOSOM II, the United Nations also has contracts with other companies for food, fuel, and water, as well as other items.

Question 4

Once U.S. forces have withdrawn, what is the minimum number of U.N. forces required for the operation in Somalia to remain viable?

Response

In a report issued by the U.N. Secretary General, there were three options for the continuation of UNOSOM II after March 31, 1994. The first option required a troop level of 32,000 and continued the mandate to maintain the secure environment created by UNITAF and to aid Somalia in creating a more stable infrastructure, encourage national political reconciliation, and help rebuild the Somali system for administering justice. The mandate also included coercive disarmament. The second option, requiring a troop level of 16,000 to 22,000, continued the same mandate, but discontinued the coercive disarmament of Somali factions. The third option outlined a significantly reduced mandate that would just control the ports and airports in the country, requiring about 5,000 troops.

The Security Council accepted the second option and extended the mandate for UNOSOM II through May 1994. U.N. officials indicate that, should troop commitments fall below the minimum of 16,000, the operation may not be executable under the current mandate. However, the third option would then be considered a viable operation if troop levels of about 5,000 to 8,000 were available.

The current operation is still mandated under Chapter VII of the U.N. charter and is termed a peace enforcement operation. It is staffed by about 19,000 troops, primarily from Pakistan, Egypt, and India. UNOSOM II is still operating only in the southern part of the country. According to State Department officials, the troops are committed to stay at least until the end of May, when the current mandate expires. One State Department official also thinks that the countries contributing troops will stay beyond that time, if there is some progress toward political reconciliation. However, he said that he could also see the contributing countries pulling out if some progress is not made. The United States is still assisting diplomatically in the operation in Somalia.

According to U.N. and U.S. officials, the key to any successful operation in Somalia is political reconciliation. State Department officials state that this is not happening quickly. The factional leaders are now talking to each

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other, but this has not translated to agreement on general institutions, such as a judicial system for the country, trust among the factions, or disarmament.

Somali Police Effort

As part of the UNOSOM II mission, the current mandate calls for UNOSOM II to assist in the reorganization of the Somali police and judicial system. As part of this assistance, the United States and other countries are working to reconstitute the Somali police, the court system, and the penal system. Justice and State Department officials said that this effort to reconstitute the police is one of the more successful reconstruction efforts that have been tried in Somalia.

According to these officials, the Somali police have always had a strong tradition of independence and professionalism. Prior to the civil war, the police were independent enough to be considered a threat by the President of Somalia, who instituted a paramilitary force as a control over the police. The police organization was destroyed by the war; but during UNITAF, many of the former members put on their old uniforms and helped with activities such as security and crowd control. UNOSOM II has been helping to reestablish the core of the police by screening applicants, training, and providing some supplies. The Somali police are now staffed at between 7,000 and 7,500 personnel, with a goal of about 10,000.

In total, about \$60 million is available for the reconstitution of the police, the court system, and the penal system. This includes contributions from other countries as well as the United States. State and Justice Department officials said that the United States has donated \$6 million in Agency for International Development funds for non-police activities, such as human rights training and to assist in the reestablishment of the Somali judicial program, \$2 million from Foreign Assistance Act funds for police salaries, and \$12 million in grant funds from the act for the International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP). ICITAP, a Justice Department program, is providing training for the Somali police, and rudimentary supplies to refurbish and equip police stations.

For its part in the effort, DOD has provided, on a non-reimbursable basis, small trucks, water tanks, batons, handcuffs, 5,000 M-16A1 rifles, 5,000 .45-caliber pistols, spare parts, and ammunition for both the rifles and pistols. These items were provided under a presidential determination, dated September 30, 1993, which allows for the drawdown of DOD stocks in the event of an unforeseen emergency, for an amount not to exceed

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\$25 million per year. The President made the determination necessary for such a drawdown under section 552 of the Foreign Assistance Act, using the full \$25 million drawdown authority for fiscal year 1993.